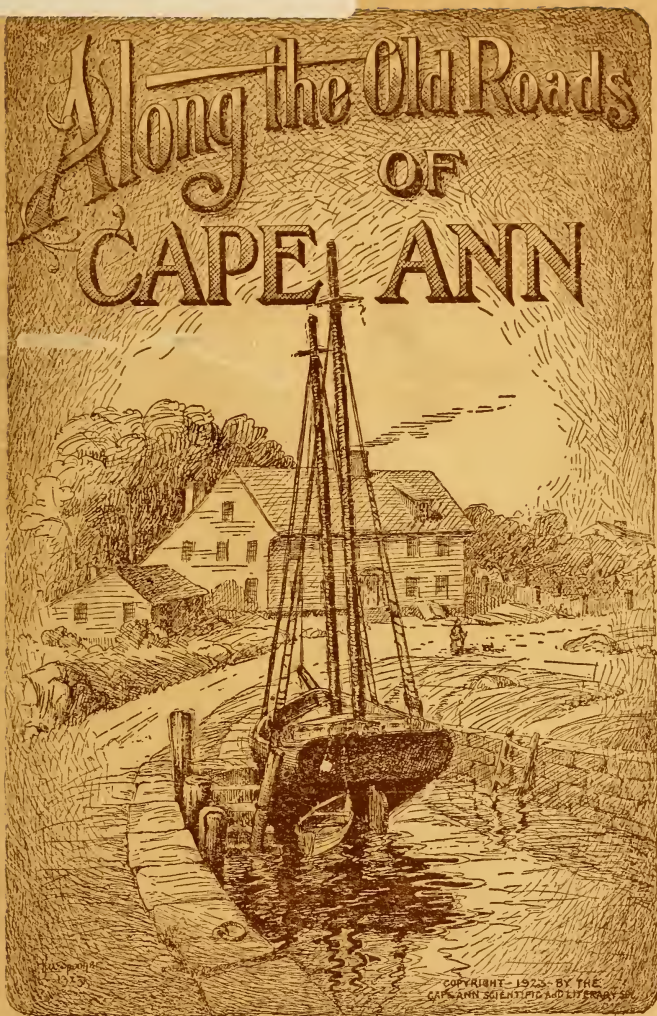
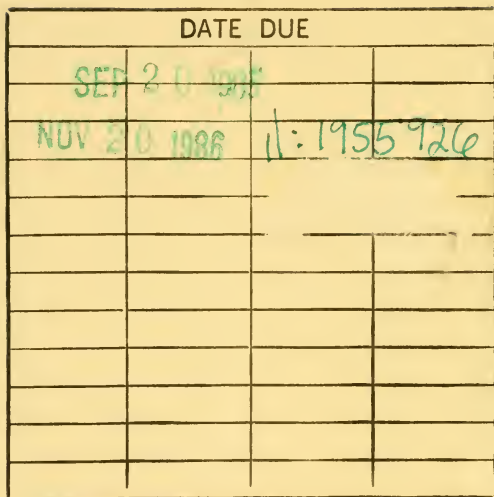


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# Along the Old Roads of Cape Ann



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TO MRS. SARAH C. ROGERS,

WHOSE INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THE  
"OLD ROADS OF CAPE ANN" HAS MADE  
THESE CHAPTERS POSSIBLE, THE CAPE  
ANN SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY ASSOCI-  
ATION, AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBES THIS  
MODEST PUBLICATION.

*Sarah C. Rogers.*



## FOREWORD

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This little book in going forth on its two-fold mission seeks to guide the stranger into pleasant paths hitherto unknown to him ; and to bring back to him who knows them well, the cheerful recollection of old beloved haunts. No liberty of trespassing on another's property is here encouraged, and it is hoped that an earnest desire to conserve our native flowers has been engendered.

Scattered here and there among quotations from the old familiar poets, lines may be found from our own native writers; these we wish to acknowledge and also express our thankful appreciation to Miss Edna A. Foster, Mr. Harold Trowbridge Pulsifer and Mr. Joseph Auslander for permission to use their verse.

“So will I build my altar in the fields,  
And the blue sky my fretted dome shall be ;  
And the sweet fragrance that the wild-flower yields  
Shall be the incense I will yield to Thee.”

## I

TO SPLIT-ROCK PASTURE  
FOR SKUNK CABBAGE

WE were within three leagues of Cape Ann, and as we sailed along the coast, we saw every hill and every island full of gay woods and high trees. The nearer we came to the shore, the more flowers in abundance; sometimes joined in sheets nine or ten yards long, which we supposed to be brought in by the tide. A westerly wind between five and six o'clock brought us to a fine sweet harbor, where there was an island where four of our men went ashore, bringing back strawberries, gooseberries, and single roses. Thus God was merciful in giving us a taste and smell of the sweet fruit as an earnest of his bountiful goodness." This quaint entry Higginson makes in his Journal in the month of June, 1629.

And now, if we wish to seek out our earliest Spring flower, and see Nature in its first unfolding, we must take our walk in the breezy month of March. The Skunk Cabbage is sometimes found earlier, but it is safer to wait till the middle of March. We will start at the foot of Mt. Vernon St., which is a well-known locality to people resident in Gloucester, but for a stranger we might say, start from the post-office,

go up Pleasant St. to Prospect, turn to the right and walk to Mt. Vernon, which we find on the left. Starting then from the foot of the street, we go up the hill, following the road till we come to Perkins St., which crosses it at right angles; and here we stop a moment to enjoy the fine view of the harbor visible at this point. Now we turn to the left, going up Perkins St., till we come to a path leading up into the woods. We follow this path, which takes us across Lamb Ledge, and gives us a fine opportunity of viewing in this unusual assemblage of rocks, a section of the terminal moraine. Once this entire locality was a large sheep pasture, and from the fact that the lambs often strayed among the rocks, got wedged in, and were unable to extricate themselves, the place acquired the name of Lamb Ledge.

We keep to the right across the ballground, and soon come out on the old Rockport Road which is a well defined public way. We walk along this road, and in the swamp on the left, we find the Skunk Cabbage. Do not look for leaves,—they appear later; we shall only see pointed spathes, piercing the brown, cheerless meadow.

“Come gentle Spring! ethereal mildness! come,  
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,  
While music wakes around veil'd in a shower  
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.”

This plant belongs to the Arum family, the tiny flowers being ranged along the spadix, like the Calla

Lily to which it is closely related; the mottled, purple spathe corresponding to the pure white one of the latter. It is unfortunate that this, our earliest Spring flower, should have the unpleasant odor that its name suggests, but it has won a place in our regard by its energy and courage; for the plant knows no rest, the fallen and withered leaf being transfixed by the rising bud.

Having now obtained our quest, we will return home, and our walk will not be uninteresting. While Nature is not yet in her Spring attire,

"We see where surly Winter passes off  
Far to the north and calls his ruffian blasts."

The view of the hills stretching out towards Dogtown and further west to Annisquam possesses a beauty all its own, for I know of no sight more appealing than that of the little evergreens rising here and there out of the grey bouldered pastures silhouetting themselves against the bare deciduous trees about to respond to the regenerating touch of Spring.

The graceful tassels of the Tag Alder are quite in evidence, and both Beeches and Maples are beginning to show color. We now go along till we see a flat stone in the wall to the left. We get over this wall, and see a path; between this path and the wall, there is a cellar—said to be that of an old school-house. By following this path, we come out to the Alewife Brook, and we now take a path by a

ridge which leads to higher ground; here we find another path, which brings us out to the same old Rockport Road, only farther down; and without further direction we may find our way to town by going down Trask St., through Judy Millet's parlor, or by Maplewood Avenue.

If this walk is taken in April, Hobble-bush and Spice-bush buds may be found; in May, Robin's Plantain, Wild Roses and Lady Slippers in Babson's pasture; in June, Mountain Laurel; and in July, in Curtis' pasture, Red Lilies and Polygala.





## AROUND THE LITTLE HEATER ROAD FOR ARBUTUS

"What joy when Winter lingered long  
To seek with ever new surprise  
The dripping banks, whose mouldering leaves among  
The modest Mayflower lifts its tender eyes."



DOUBTLESS the feeling that inspired the above lines has found a responsive chord in our own hearts, and accounts for the ardor with which, with every recurrent Spring, we seek the lovely Arbutus blossoms, to which the Pilgrims gave the name of Mayflower.

The long winter has yet scarcely passed from our remembrance, but the snow has given place to the moisture of thawing sod, and we hunt under the mouldering leaves for the modest but fragrant flower. With what joy we behold the first blossom; and even if after a long tramp, we are able to take home just a few clusters, we feel repaid for our exertion. Never very abundant in our woods, and now probably not so abundant as in former years, there are places on the Rafe's Chasm road and Magnolia Avenue where it yet may be found.

To this latter place we will wend our way this afternoon. We take a West Gloucester bus, and get

off at Magnolia Avenue, once called the Little Heater Road. It received that name from the fact, that the territory enclosed by the connection of this road with the Magnolia and West Parish roads, took a three cornered shape, similar to an old-fashioned snow-plow, which was called a heater. We turn in this road, pass the station, and when about half way through—a mile at least from the station—on the left hand side of the road, we shall find the *Arbutus*.

Please be careful in picking the flower, not to disturb the root, for it will not be long, unless the plant is more tenderly handled, before this beautiful harbinger of Spring, will become entirely extinct in our woods. Searching beneath the "mouldering leaves" we have culled a modest bouquet, and now we take an abrupt turn to the left, following a path that leads up to a brook. Here we are likely to find Yellow Violets, Hobble-bush, Bellwort, Cassandra, and Sweet Gale. We cross the brook and go toward the east, the path we are now on being quite a crooked one; but still it is a path all the way, leading us up over a hill, passing Wallace Pond on the left, and bringing us out to the Gipsy camp by Fernwood Lake. Here we will sit down and wait for the bus that takes us back to town. If we have our Whittier with us, we will take out our volume and read his poem called "The Mayflowers"—Mrs. Dana calls our attention to it in her "Wild Flowers", and particularly to the

lines that brought courage and hope to the Quaker poet in the dark period of the Civil War.

"But warmer suns erelong shall bring  
To life the frozen sod,  
And through dead leaves of hope shall spring  
Afresh the flowers of God."





### III

## TO SALT ISLAND FOR DUTCHMAN'S BREECHES. AN APRIL WALK

"Yet not alone my being grew  
By Ocean's influence vague and free,  
But all the secret of the Springtime knew  
With beauty's patient growth in flower and tree."



THUS sang James Parsons, a lineal descendant of that Jeffrey Parsons, who made his home in 1685 on the Joppa Road, now Witham Street. We do not know what analogy to the Ancient Joppa appealed to the early residents of this locality, that they should have given it this name. We know that the fishing business was once vigorously prosecuted here, and that this road was once lined with fishermen's homes—it was also the road leading to the sea. Perhaps for the latter reason alone it received its name; be that as it may, it is over this old road we shall traverse this afternoon toward Salt Island in our search for Dutchman's Breeches and Dogtooth Violets.

In taking this walk, we must make our time conform to the requirements of the tide, for it is only at dead low water that a dry crossing can be made to the Island; but, having made the necessary calculations, we take the Rockport bus, and proceed to Witham

Street, where we get off and walk down the quaint old road, noting the few old houses still left here nestling among the trees and overgrown bush. The original Jeffrey Parsons house is gone, but one built not long after to take its place, may still be seen on the left, though on the opposite side of the road from where it originally stood. It is the last house before coming to the road that turns off to Starknought Heights. We follow this road to the shore, and if we have been fortunate enough to time ourselves correctly, we pass over dry-shod to the island, get our flowers without waiting long enough to be overtaken by the tide, and recross to the mainland. Later in the month or in May, Columbine and also Anemones may be found on the island.

Returning, we may reach home by various routes; by the way we came, which is the shortest, but if we wish to prolong our walk, we can go along the shore nearly to the Pavilion, cross the sand, follow the path or roadway over Starknought Heights, and come out farther down on Witham Street. Still another way would be to walk across Little Good Harbor Beach, and cross over to the Bass Rocks road.

Whichever way we take, our vision commands a long stretch of coast-line with the broad Atlantic in full view. Those of us who remember the late Dr. Bartlett, for many years Rector of St. Mary's

Church, Rockport, will be pleased to see his beautiful lines quoted below.

“Where the rock-pinioned beach holds back the strong ocean,  
And the oft-changing scene entrances our eyes,  
Where the waves toss their foam, and are always in motion,  
And deep calls to deep with thundrous replies,  
The soul must be dead that can feel no emotion  
When the marvellous sea continues to speak,  
Thoughts deeper than words, and not a vain notion  
Inspires us towards loftiest aims to upreach.”







## IV

### TO FRESH WATER COVE AND RAFE'S CHASM

"Winter is past; the heart of Nature Warms  
Beneath the wrecks of unresisted storms  
Doubtful at first, suspected more than seen  
The southern slopes are fringed with tender green;  
On sheltered banks, beneath the dropping eaves  
Spring's earliest nurslings spread their glowing leaves."



HIS walk that we are anticipating, so varied, so beautiful, and so full of historic interest, would be pleasurable at any season of the year; for of all the walks that we have taken or may take, not one has such a combination of beaches, brooks, granite headlands, meadows, swamps and evergreen woods as has this. In Spring however, we feel most powerfully the call of the open, and what a joy it is to be

"Beside the stream, where last year blossoms dead  
Mouldered to dust, a new life lifts its head."

We will start from Blynman Bridge known until recently as the "Cut Bridge". The old name if not elegant was sufficiently suggestive, but perhaps it is well to remember the enterprising parson who first carried into execution the project that had been for some years before the Colonial government. Strange as it may seem to us, the clergymen of that day were

much occupied with things outside of their profession. Of his successor Mr. Emerson, Mr. Babson quaintly remarks "he was not indifferent to the secular affairs of life, for he became the sole or chief owner of the three mills of the town and died possessed of a considerable estate".

Perhaps Mr. Blynman had he stayed here longer, might also have laid up "treasures on earth", but he seems to have had a comet-like personality. Suddenly appearing from another field of labor with a company of followers, he organizes a church, cuts a canal, crosses it with a bridge, and after sweeping across the sky, sinks below the horizon taking in his train so many followers that the church is too impoverished to support a successor till many years after. Well, at all events he did us good service, and standing on the spot where his foresight and energy united the waters of Ipswich Bay with those of the broad Atlantic, we pay our respects to his memory.

But we are not quite ready to take our real walk for before starting let us stop a bit longer and take in all the delightful views that are spread out before us. It is not often that the eye can compass so much that is varied and beautiful from a single view point, and we must not miss any of it.

To the left lies the beach—"The Beach" of the town which once used to be gay with bathers every Summer morning. Notice how gently it curves to the

headland, or fort, as we say, though it is a fortification no longer; but in Revolutionary times earthworks were thrown up there and it boasted of eight twelve pounders, with which it was supposed to protect the inner harbor where all of the business of the town was done. Further to the east, picturesque Rocky Neck is seen, making little Harbor Cove where Champlain came something more than three hundred years ago. We can almost see them caulking up their little shallop and going ashore to wash their soiled linen. Then the long shore line of Eastern Point stretching out to the entrance of the outer harbor folding in its embrace Ten Pound Island, where Hutchinson's men found wild strawberries, gooseberries, and single roses. This finishes a picture you would travel far to equal.

To the right a rocky beach terminating in a headland covered with oaks presents a bold coast line, and swinging round to the north we follow the canal to the place where it loses its straight and artificial lines and becomes a gentle tidal river meandering over salt marshes against a background of pine covered hills to Ipswich Bay.

"How silent in the morning, and how still  
The river winds along, while tangled grasses  
Bend the swaying tide as on it passes;  
And seems to wander at its own sweet will  
Reflecting on its bosom, rock and hill.  
The lingering masses over sand hills haze  
To open sea."

We will go on now and instead of taking the prosaic highway we will cross the Park beneath the two lines of beautiful elms. This tract of land was once a part of the Whittemore farm, owned by Samuel Whittemore the first teacher of a permanent Grammar School at the Harbor and a prominent citizen of his time. Subsequently it became the property of Mr. Benjamin K. Hough who set out the elm trees about the middle of the last century and from whose heirs the city bought it in 1898 for a public park.

Meandering along this pretty road, we pass the headland on the left where remains of the earthworks of the Civil War period can still be seen; and Half Moon Beach that Lane the artist used to love to paint, throwing over it that lovely roseate hue that was so peculiar to him.

Now we come to the further headland from which we get the most spacious view of the harbor and the open sea beyond; and then crossing over Fishermen's Field where the bronze tablet tells the story of those fourteen men who wintered here in 1623-4, thus laying the first foundation stones of that structure which afterward became the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, we come out on the highway.

Here our road leads along the shore, and we come to a place called steep bank, rightly so called for its side leads down to the water almost perpendic-

ularly. In August it is covered with the tall yellow gerardia, whose stalks sometimes six or seven feet high, thrust their loveliness into mid-air for the pleasure of the passer-by.

Passing the Hovey, now Hammond Place, we come to Sawyer's Hill though the road is much wider and the declivity much less steep than it was some years ago. At the foot of it lies the Sawyer house much added to, but the original homestead not much altered, since Mr. Sawyer's death. Here lived in Summer Mr. Samuel E. Sawyer who attested his love for his native city by giving us the Sawyer Free Library and bestowing on us many other wise benefactions.

Just beyond where the road turns we see an old stone wharf, where a tidal inlet runs up into the marsh. An old grass grown road leads down to it, and here the first dwellers of the little hamlet built their tiny houses and put out to sea in their primitive fishing craft. This perhaps was two or more centuries ago, and as we straggle along the road we see an old chimney or a gambrel roof that harks back also to an early period.

Soon to the left we see a sign, "Hesperus Avenue", and we turn down this road, sorry that we cannot say Master Moore's lane, and be understood, as we used to be, for till recent years it was always so called. Master Moore lived in the little white gambrel roof house on the right as had a generation of Moores

before him. His father, William Moore, settled here and built the house about the middle of the eighteenth century. He taught one of the public schools in the town in 1757. At the time however, when Lindsay paid us a visit he was out in a boat with his son Joseph, and both were taken on board the man-of-war as they had a pleasant habit of doing in 1775. Joseph was a boy of twelve and was put ashore near his home, but his father was never more heard from.

On arriving at manhood Joseph followed his father's profession of teaching and became a very famous instructor of navigation. From all over the town came the flower of old Gloucester families, between voyages, to learn the science that enabled them to do business on the great waters. He also published a text book on navigation; one copy of which at least the writer knows to be in existence.

From now on in their season, flowers line our pathway. Just below on the other side of the street we see a cottage always known as the Dilloway house, and in April and May we may find in the meadow back of it dog tooth violets. There are no houses after this, but searching among the barberry bushes we shall find places, nothing more than holes now, which were once cellars of old settlers' houses and which give shelter to the gay columbine and yellow celandine. In late autumn, the pink petals of Herb Robert and the straw colored flowers of the



witch-hazel, give us a last bit of color before the sleep of Winter begins. Across the way from these cellars down in a boggy spot grow huge stalks of thoroughwort, and vines of the ground nut sprawling over everything with delicious freedom.

Our road is interesting and we walk on unmindful of time, sometimes catching a glimpse of the ocean through the branches of the oaks and pine and always with the ceaseless noise of its movement in our ears. After a quarter of a mile or so, we see a red granite island, so near the shore that in a low course of tides it may be reached by wading. This is Norman's Woe and no one knows why it received this name, unless like Thatcher's, because of an awful tragedy occurring there. We know that a Richard Norman sailed on a voyage from which he never returned. Nothing but sea golden rod and a weird little gray sedge grow upon it, and we fancy they must feel the discouragement of living with such slight chance of ever being picked by human hands.

With the splash of the waters beating against its sides keeping us constantly in mind of shipwrecks occurring here, we walk on quite a piece till we come to a red brook, and after that a white one. And here we find a wealth of flowers, cowslips, clintonia, violets blue and yellow, bunchberry, wild geranium, and many others; perhaps too, on the hills on the

right we have found the ever charming arbutus, for it grows in the woods about here:—

“I wandered lonely where the pine trees made  
Against the bitter East their barricade,  
And guided by its sweet  
Perfume, I found within a narrow dell  
The trailing Spring flower tinted like a shell  
Amid dry leaves and mosses at my feet.”

After passing the white brook the rough road turns abruptly to the left and a sign board tells us that the Chasm lies in this direction. A gently rising foot path of perhaps a quarter of a mile over low shrubs and mountain cranberry, leads us to the brow of a sharp precipice, and here we have what we have come to see, Rafe's Crack or Chasm as it is now called.

This fissure is not a score of feet across its greatest width, and at its narrowest can be jumped, but looking down into its depths from a height of sixty feet, one is overpowered by the sublime majesty of the sea. On a pleasant day, the rumbling and the gurgling of the waves as they find their way to the narrow angle of the upper end, and dash against its sides in their retreat, is indeed impressive, but in a storm, the sight must be well nigh unbearable. “Man's control” indeed “stops with the sea”.

Standing on the higher or eastern edge of the Chasm we have a view of the open ocean close at hand, and of the spires of Gloucester in the distance

“Touched by a light that hath no name  
A glory never sung.”



It is time to be thinking of the return home. We have seen enough; let us walk into Magnolia and take the bus on our way back. We shall be travelling by the light of the setting sun and all that we have seen and felt seems now only a beautiful dream,

"But beauty seen is never lost  
God's colors are all fast."





## V

### OVER FOX HILL FOR RHODORA

"Rhodora! if the Sages ask thee why  
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,  
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,  
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being."



THESE much-quoted words from Emerson remind us that it is about the middle of May, and the brilliant, purplish-pink flower, immortalized by him, must now be in its glory. And it is not only the beauty of the flower we shall see and feel this afternoon, but the melancholy beauty that clings to old neglected roads, once replete with life, but now mostly traversed by lovers of Nature.

It is true we start out on a thoroughfare teeming with modern industries, but after a while, we shall find ourselves away from the noisy highway picturing to ourselves the ways and customs of primitive days, when the home, with its little garden wrested from an unwilling soil, the mill, and the church, completed the circle of the early settlers' existence. We will start from Wass Square, which for the benefit of the summer visitor we will say is situated at the junction of Maplewood Ave. and Prospect Street, to the right of Swift's store-house. We follow this avenue through its entire length to its junction with Poplar Street.

Not many years ago, this whole district was pasture land, and Gloucester Ave., which we have passed on our right, was the old road to Rockport, over which for nearly fifty years, the settlers of that locality wended their way to the 1st Parish church on the Green.

Respectable tradition asserts that the first dry-goods shop of the town was located on the spot opposite the beginning of this old road, where in the writer's remembrance (all beyond being pasture land) it turned a corner in joining the street or road just mentioned. This seems less improbable on reflection, than at first thought, when one remembers that, while for a number of years after our settlement, all the finer material for wearing apparel and house furnishing was brought over in ships to the well-to-do, as a private importation, there were many not so well placed, whose wants were mostly supplied by home products. These were glad to add a kerchief, ribbon, cheap shawl or a yard or two of India cotton—the outcome of some sailor's adventure—to their home spun; and a shop of this kind may have existed there to catch the trade of connecting roads.

We turn the corner into Poplar Street, and from this point on, we shall travel over some of the oldest roads in town. Walking toward the west, we come to Cherry Street, once prettily called Fox Hill, and turn in this road; but while standing on this corner, we will take a look about us. In the earliest years of

our settlement, this was a much-traveled road. At the extreme west on the Green, lay the meeting-house of the first Organized church; just around the corner, on the right of the Fox Hill road, was the first mill of the town—a grist-mill first, and then a fulling-mill—and it was also the only road to Annisquam. Somewhere on the road between here and Washington Street, lived Parson Emerson—the minister who succeeded Mr. Blynman—and the house now occupied by Mr. Albert Procter, which was the birthplace of the lamented Col. Allen, for whom the G. A. R. Post is named, was built on the original site of the Thomas Allen house.

Having turned into the Fox Hill road, we stop at the Alewife Brook, so called because in former years, Alewives in large quantities came up here to spawn, and look for evidences of the old mill; they are still there, and a few years ago were quite apparent, but are now concealed beneath a thick growth of bush.

We climb the hill, noting as we walk up the roadway two old poplar trees, that stand as sentinels, and a winding path at the left that led to Tammy Younger's house, which was still standing in the memory of some living. The writer remembers a well-defined chimney standing stark against the sky; but now, not even the cellar is discernible. After Tammy died, the house, and what little there was in

it, was left to decay by the slow process of Nature, for not even the children dared to invade the precincts, Tammy's reputation as a witch having projected itself into a considerable space of time after she had left these earthly scenes.

We take up our walk again, and not far from Tammy's house on the left, we see an old cellar; but evidences of early inhabitants are fast disappearing, and the delightful grass-grown road of a few years ago has given place to a more frequented thoroughfare. The direction of the road has not been changed, but new houses have been built, and much of the old charm has gone.

We go on, passing Reynard Street on the left, which leads out to Washington Street and the old grist-mill, which was in operation till within a comparatively short time ago. There has been a mill on this spot since 1652—first a saw-mill, and in 1678 a grist-mill was erected. It may be interesting to those of the Catholic faith to know that in a house, owned and lived in by John Dooly,—now torn down, but just around the corner on Reynard Street—mass was celebrated for the first time in our city.

We soon come to the Gravel Hill road on the right, which we pass, and walk along skirting Dogtown, which lies to the east; and here we have a better view of the hills, dotted over with boulders and

patches of Bayberry. The sun is casting shadows, and before we know it, we are repeating Bickerstith's lines :

"Our lives are like the shadows  
On sunny hills that lie."

Soon we come to the Rhodora on our right so brilliant on its leafless stems as to attract immediate attention. It is a member of the Heath family, rising to the height of one or two feet; quite different from the Arbutus that trails along the ground. Having procured our flowers, we may walk straight ahead to Gee Avenue, and follow Gee Avenue to Washington Street; or we can cross the pasture, and come out on the Pilgrim Hill road, or Holly Street, as it is now called, and proceed to Goose Cove, or Dennison Street. The Pilgrim Hill road leads over a very delightful stretch of country, and makes a satisfactory finish to an afternoon's walk.





## VI

### TO THE WHALE'S JAW BY GEE AVENUE

"There loved and blessed my spirit broods  
O'er barren commons dear to me."



PERHAPS no spot on Cape Ann is dearer to those of us familiar with the old roads and by-paths than "those wild wastes of uplands" lying to the east of Mill River, and back of the traveled highway, known as Dogtown. We have all felt its charm, and it is not difficult to discover wherein it lies. The grey boulders, seamed and worn by time, relieved only by scanty herbage, tell the story of the Glacial Period, when this old world was being made ready for habitation; and the old dismantled cellars, with the pathetic little patches of reclaimed land beside them, speak of the humble joys and sorrows of an extinct population.

Barrenness and desolateness on all sides afford a fruitful subject for the exercise of imagination. How did this tract look to the early settlers and why did they come here and make their early homes?

If we stop to think, there were many reasons contributive to the settlement of this locality. In the first place, land could be had for little or nothing, and what is now a barren waste, was at that time

undoubtedly covered with a forest growth. The frequency of the boulder prevented a thick growth, but there was enough timber probably to build such rude dwellings as they had, and furnish sufficient fuel, which they could have for the cutting; small game abounded, and they were allowed by law to pasture their few domestic animals on the cleared places.

It is not unlikely too, that these simple-minded folk experienced, instinctively, a sense of protectiveness, that from earliest times, the hills have always given to primitive man; they have always, too, typified strength and endurance, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills", says the Psalmist, "from whence cometh my help". Both Jacob and Moses, in giving their parting blessing, speak of the "everlasting hills", and Jesus, foretelling the fall of Jerusalem, says "the people shall call upon the hills to cover them".

So it seems, then, within the bounds of a reasonable imagination, to say that both for economic and protective reasons, this was the home chosen by a class of people, whose occupation was intermittent, and whose living was precarious. People were living here previous to 1741, as is shown by a map of that date; and Mr. Babson says in his history, that just after the Revolutionary War, there were about forty houses scattered along the sides of the old roads. After this period, the population declined, many of the men having perished, either in the land or naval forces,

engaged in the war; and the younger generation having built homes for themselves nearer the new highway, which had gradually come into existence, the old houses came to be inhabited by widows only, who got an insufficient support from the products of a few domestic animals, eked out by the selling of berries and herbs at the Harbor, and the willing dole of the charitable.

Doubtless, a disproportionate number of dogs were kept to afford company, and to protect their pitifully meagre possessions from marauders, and this led to the locality being known under the sobriquet of Dogtown, which name has clung to it to the present time.

I remember hearing in my childhood that they never had white flour but once a year, at Thanksgiving, when they brought their pans down to a merchant in the Parish, and had them filled.

Some were still living there in 1832, in a wretched condition, as is attested by a letter in the writer's possession. Mention is made in this letter of two ladies going up and taking them clothes from the "Reading Society", followed by reflections on their unfortunate moral and physical condition.

Mr. Babson brings his account of this settlement poetically and charitably to a close, by quoting the well-known verse from Goldsmith's "Deserted Village".

"But now the sounds of population fail  
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale;  
No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,  
But all the blooming flush of life is fled."

This is hardly a flower-walk; in the Spring, we shall find only the common hillside flowers, such as the Violet, Saxifrage, Bluet, Cassandra, and Sweetbriar Rose; but nothing distinctive. In the Autumn, the Bayberry with its sweet fragrance will be our chief reward.\*

We are, however, going to view the Whale's Jaw, and with this introduction to the locality, we are ready to set out. One should go to Dogtown either in the Spring or Autumn, and as it is situated in the heart of the Cape, the approaches to it are many. The walk we have planned for today takes place sometime in May, when we shall witness the resurrection of Nature, and see it in all the beauty of its unfolding.

We take the bus, and get off either at Stanwood Street, or Gee Avenue, walk up either of these streets crossing Cherry Street, and continuing on the same road to Lemuel Friend's, which has been remodeled in recent years, but which was once referred to as the old Castle. We keep straight on this road, passing the road to the Rifle-Range on the left, and soon on the left we shall see a large boulder, beside which is the cellar of Morgan Stanwood of Mr. Rich's poem.

Proceeding on our way, we come to a slough, which we cross on stepping-stones, and beyond this, is a pair of bars which brings us out to the Common, so called because the boundaries to the lots have long

\* Later in June and July some of the orchids are found in the swamps near Vivian's.

since become indefinable, and the land is rented, as so many cow-rights.

We go through the bars and follow a grassy road to an immense rock, called Peter's Pulpit, where from a near-by hill, the Whale's Jaw can be clearly seen. Now from this point, this same road, which we still keep, turns to the left, and after following it a short distance, we leave it, and cross the pasture to a swamp, around which there is a good path with stepping-stones. We go around the swamp and from there, we take a path directly to the Whale's Jaw.

Just before arriving at our destination, we shall see on our right a stone marked with a cross, once believed to mark the place of concealment of Capt. Kidd's treasure. This rock once stood above ground, but now lies a couple of feet below the surface.

To return, walk a short distance to the North-east, and you will find a good path that leads directly to Rockport; or take a path to the left down the pasture, till you come to a pair of bars, cross the brook, climb a hill, and follow a path that leads to the right. This leads to a broader path which goes to the left, and comes out on Dennison Street.



## VII

### IN THE WOODS FROM ANNISQUAM TO LANESVILLE—A TREE WALK

"How sweet it is when Mother Fancy rocks  
The wayward brain to saunter through a wood."



HIS walk may be taken with pleasure and profit at almost any season of the year; but it would better be taken in the Spring, when Nature on all sides is awakening, and the trees are coming into leaf. It has but scant historical interest, and the flowers we shall meet with, unless we except the *Pyrola*, are only such as are common to most woods; but we shall see many lovely trees, both deciduous and evergreen; and we shall find much pleasure in making them a special object of interest.

We will start at Revere Street, nearly opposite the Annisquam church, which takes us over Sand Porridge Hill, so called on account of the deposit of sand in this locality. We see a couple of old houses, dating from the early part of the 18th Century, which tells us that this road was probably made at the time of the setting off of the 3rd Parish, as farther on it connects with the road leading to the Sandy Bay settlement.

It was more convenient for people in that part of the town to attend this church than the one on the



Green; so we may suppose they embraced the opportunity of doing so at an early date. We follow this road past the Dennison house, which is also one of the old landmarks, going through two pairs of bars, and take the road to the left leading into the woods.

This tract of land was burnt over a few years ago; but we find it now covered with young Oaks, Beeches and Birches, a Maple here and there, and Pines. Trees have always formed an interesting subject for study, and, as we go along, we might note some of the more distinctive facts concerning them. The Oak, for example, of which we shall see many this afternoon, is a tree of great antiquity; and while the legend that it was the first tree created by God, can hardly be supported, we do find it mentioned very often in the Bible.

It seems both then, and later, to have been a tree much venerated, for we read that Joshua set the Stone of the Covenant under an oak; and Isaiah speaks of taking an oak to make a God of. It was dedicated to Jupiter by the Romans, and spoken of by Virgil as "Jove's own tree that holds the woods in awful sovereignty". In England, this tree attains great size, and a round table, still shown in Winchester, claiming to have been King Arthur's, was made from a single slice of oak cut from an enormous bole.

There are several varieties of oak found on the Cape, the White Oak being the most easily dis-



tinguished by the rounded lobes of its leaves, and the sweetness of its acorns. It has a white bark with dark spots, and a few of its dried leaves persist till circulation is renewed in the Spring. Of all the oaks, this is the most durable for building purposes, especially desirable where it has an alternate wet and dry exposure. Red and Black Oaks have sharp pointed lobes, bitter acorns, and, while easily distinguished from the white, are not so easily distinguished from each other.

Growing with the Oaks, we see a great many Beeches. Modern forestry plants them together, as young Beeches drip a great deal of moisture, and protect the stems of Oak, till they attain timber dimensions. The Beech is a noble tree, and reaches to great height. The opening of the Beech bud in the Spring is most interesting—first, the tough brown sheath, then scales of filmy tissue, and then the embryo leaves begin to unfold; at first, grey and silver and

"Then each bond broken and burst at last,  
All fluted and pointed and daintily curled;  
Then green, just the loveliest green in the world  
They fling to the breezes each fetter and gyve,  
And laugh for the pleasure of being alive."

We get our word, book from "buck" or Beech, thin plates of the bark having furnished the earliest bindings for volumes; and tradition tells us, also, that the letters of the first book printed in English were fashioned from the bark of this tree.

With the Oaks and Beeches, are many young Birches, that always come up on newly burnt over

ground, and an occasional Maple. If we take our walk in April, we shall see the Maple in flower, for it is the earliest tree to announce the return of Spring, its blossoms unfolding more than a fortnight before its leaves. It is Coleridge I think who has given us this exquisite verse that Lowell calls the most beautiful landscape in words.

"Beneath yon birch with silver bark,  
And boughs so pendulous and fair,  
The brook falls, scattered by the rock  
And all is mossy there."

Just before we come to the end of this wood road, we encounter an immense boulder, but low enough for us to walk over, and then we come out into an open country, where there are one or two houses. If we wish, we can turn down here and find a road leading back to Revere Street; but those of us not faint-hearted, keep right on the beaten track which leads into the old Rockport road. We may follow this road if we wish, and come out not far from the station in Rockport; but if, after following it some distance, we take a path to the left which soon becomes a road, it will lead us over an exceedingly pretty stretch of country.

Here we see more trees, and come to a place where a cultivation of fruit trees is in progress, and while we do not come across any full-grown Pines, we see small ones, both White and Pitch, which are to be distinguished by the number of leaves or needles in a sheath. A White Pine is feathery, has five

leaves in a sheath; the Pitch only three; while the Red, sometimes called Norway, has only two. The latter, I think, is not indigenous to the Cape. Then, while the White Pine has a straight tall trunk with lateral branches, the Pitch Pine has a more gnarled appearance, and does not grow to such height. We come to a very pretty Pitch Pine later on in our walk.

In following this road, we come to a ledge in sight of houses, which would bring us out into Pigeon Cove; but again we take a road to the left, which finally terminates at a quarry railroad track. Here we see the pretty Pitch Pine, before mentioned, if ruthless hands have spared it. We follow the track along, work our way round amongst some work-sheds, pass an enclosure with sheep pasturing in it; and finally come out near the Lanesville church.

We left the Dennison house a little more than two hours ago, and we see the bus waiting for us at the foot of the hill, so we quicken our steps to take it. We have had a beautiful walk, and feel better for it.

"Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy: for she can so inform  
The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
Nor greetings, where no kindness is, nor all  
The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold  
Is full of blessings."



VIII  
TO THE SOUTHERN WOODS  
FOR LAUREL

"And what is so rare as a day in June?  
Then, if ever, come perfect days;  
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune  
And over it softly her warm ear lays."



HERE is a day such as the poet describes, so let us go for Laurel. While the Mountain Laurel is an evergreen, and always beautiful for its foliage, it is in June that we find it in flower. It is native to North America, and is found in abundance on our hillsides. It is not the Laurel of the Ancients, symbol of victory, though there is some resemblance in the leaves. (The classic shrub, supposed to be *Laurus Nobilis*, was brought to this country by the colonists, but did not thrive in our soil.)

The correct name of our shrub is *Kalmia*, so named in honor of the Swedish Botanist, Kalm, who was sent to this country in 1748 by his government to make investigations in Natural History. It has been transplanted in England, where it is very much thought of, and its flowering in one of the celebrated gardens of London, is advertised in the daily papers every year.

We take the Rockport bus, and get out at Cape Pond road, and follow this road round to the back side

of the ice-houses. Walking toward the east, we go up a little hill and follow a path a little to the left. Now we turn to the right, where there are some spruce trees, and after passing these trees, we begin to find laurel. We get over the wall, and here we see a road that leads to the laurel fields.

Not long ago there appeared in one of our daily papers an appeal to the public to spare this plant, by substituting some other green for large decorations, as it would become extinct if picked so carelessly as it has been in recent years. It is propagated by seed, which depend on bees or other insects for fertilization, and if broken off too close to the ground, the plant dies out. All guardians of our native flowers should remember this, and pick off only the top branches, leaving always some of the flowers to form new plants.

Now, having gathered our flowers,

"We sit in the warm shade and feel right well,  
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell."

and being rejuvenated, we take up our walk again, following the same road, which brings us out to the highway in Rockport.

The softened rays of a late afternoon sun are still shining on our path, as we turn our footsteps homeward, gilding every fern and leaf with the promise of a bright tomorrow.

Some of us perhaps were not singing "praises with gladness" when we made the oblation of the morning's

homely task, but now we have received a touch of nature. The step is quicker, the heart-beats are stronger and the cob-webs have have been cleared from the brain.

“Who knows whither the clouds have fled?  
In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;  
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed;  
The heart forgets its sorrow and ache.”







## IX

### ALONG THE ROAD FROM MEETING-HOUSE GREEN TO WHEELER'S POINT

"The happy season comes apace,  
When generous nature doth invite  
Those who would view her smiling face,  
Where best her charms unveil to light,—  
The care worn, pent up city wight,  
The student weary of his books,  
The scribes who endless themes indite,  
And such as grope through legal crooks  
To seek her cool refreshing nooks."



THESE lines are taken from the "Summer Hegira" of the late Judge Davis whose benignant presence many of us remember. It is particularly suggestive of the place where we shall walk this afternoon, because, while for many years it was entirely inhabited by a few original families and their descendants, it has in recent years sheltered a large summer colony. Almost everyone knows the Wheeler's Point road, but perhaps few know that it is one of our oldest thoroughfares, and originally was a continuation of Washington Street, the part extending beyond today being of a much later date.

The reason for this was because grants of land were made here very early in our settlement. In 1647 John Coit had his residence on the extreme end. John Pearce had a grant of land here in 1651 and gave a

house lot to his son in 1680. The Stanwoods, four or more of them, were also here about this time and later. At first it was called Pearce's Point, then Stanwood's Point, and I think Gee Point.

The property changed hands many times till it was finally purchased by Finson Wheeler in 1833 and has been known by its present name ever since. In the early records the entire tract appears under the name of "Neck of House Lots", and the point of land right across, now Annisquam Point, Planters Neck, which also was settled about the same time.

It seems strange at first thought that these remote localities should have been chosen as places of habitation by the earliest visitors to our shores; but it must be remembered that a greater part of our Cape was covered by a thick forest growth, and while roads were built later, our first thoroughfares were the waterways, and the "Cut" having been made in 1643, the river settlements could easily put themselves into communication with those at the harbor.

On this walk I think we might appropriately start at Meeting-house Green, for it is here that the town began. As is well known, in those days the town existed for the Church, and not the Church for the Town, so once a site was established for the church, the town naturally grew around it. Four successive churches were built on this locality, the last one not being taken down till 1840, so it is easily

seen that by recalling the people who once lived on this road, especially the old retired sea captains, our walk will not be uninteresting.

Taking a look behind before we start, we see what is now known as the Ellery house, but which was built about 1704 for Parson White, and right opposite the gambrel roof house built for Joseph Allen's son about 1740. One of the Russia Sea Captains came to live in it in 1806 making it his home till he died thirty years later. His sea voyages were not continued till the time of his death; he retired as most of them did, and brought up his family on the farm, but old sea chests and an immense hide covered trunk are still in the attic to call to remembrance his seafaring days.

Now we walk along, and just ahead of us we see a large white house which by additions and removal from a lower level, have somewhat obscured its age, but the large square chimney in the middle tells the story; another one of the Russia ship masters lived here. I am not sure if he made any voyages after his marriage in 1786, at any rate he built this house in 1792 on land given him by his father (who lived in a house of the Ellery type just above,) and reared a large family of sons and daughters.

The writer has often heard it said that he retired with \$21,000, which at that time seemed so large a fortune he did not see how he could ever spend it,

but an ever increasing family I fancy must soon have divested him of that idea, for besides some dying in infancy, eleven children grew to manhood and womanhood. Four of the sons followed in the footsteps of their father, became ship masters and were well known in the principal ports of the world. The details of this family would not be so particularly entered into were it not that it pictures a type that was met with all over town for about three-quarters of a century. Whole families followed the sea, fathers, and after them their sons; each boy as he stowed away his sea-chest in the fore-castle looking forward to the time when he should be master of a ship and walk the quarterdeck. This called for not only good seamanship, but a capacity to deal with situations such as is not known today, and it was found right here in Gloucester.

Going on we pass three modern houses of cheerful countenance if not of serious attitude, and then come to one which seems to look rebukingly at the product of the present generation. Its straight uprights and solemn demeanor shows it to have outlived its contemporaries, and to be amongst the moderns but not of them. In spite of the loss of its big middle chimney, its wide front door and small paned windows which the hand of improvement has not spared, its dignified frame and high-bred manner are left, for which let us be thankful, and also that it rests comfortably on the ground just as Parson Rogers

placed it when he came to minister to the people of this Parish.

The pastorate of this good man covered the period of the Revolutionary War; and his anxieties were many, not living to enjoy the blessings of peace; but he left children who lived to identify themselves with the Gloucester of a happier period. One of his daughters by her marriage to William Babson became the grandmother of our historian. John was a noted school teacher for forty years and town clerk for thirty-five, and William taught school in a little schoolhouse—under the Poles I think—and was also employed at the Custom House. His schoolmaster's desk is still in existence and the writer has seen a water color portrait of him as a young man, his hair cut short and powdered, wearing a bright blue coat; but his best portrait is preserved in the side-splitting stories told of him, for he had a jovial disposition and did not regard things in the serious manner of the older brother. Two of his sons were famous ship-masters and his daughter was the mother of our last anniversary orator.

Now we come to three or four modern houses and then to one moved to its present location as may be seen by its perched up appearance and underpinning of recent date. Yes, the big chimney is gone but look at the fine front door with the pilasters at the sides,—they used to make pretty doorways in those days. It originally stood on the Pearce farm just above and

one can but wonder if these old houses that sheltered large families do not feel forlorn, transplanted to other surroundings amongst people who knew them not, in earlier days.

But we must not forget our flowers; let us cross over to the other side and getting through the bars climb the rocky hill. If our walk be in May we shall find most of the common wild flowers growing on the slopes. I have also found the gay wild columbine there, and at any time the flowering bushes, the lichens and mosses give us a pleasing sense of nature. The view also which this elevation affords is very beautiful as we look down in the valley and over across to the barren hills of Dogtown. The farm bordering on the highway with its old apple orchard, was, in the writer's remembrance, the property of one who bore the title of Captain, but I am not sure he was a shipmaster; it may have been a military title. Leaving no descendants in town, it has passed into other hands.

By walking along on the ridge of Poles' Rocks, we have come to the end of our elevation, and we must clamber down the side and get on to our road which lies just below us. At first the walk is not especially attractive, but we soon reach a pretty country road and come to a large barn which is in the rear of a farm where still another old shipmaster settled down after his seafaring days were over to till the soil, and also for many years, to run the mill that we see in



retirement on the bridge. He had several sons and daughters, one of the latter marrying a Calcutta captain who made his home with them. I have heard it said of the captain first spoken of that once he was away on a three years' voyage and during all that time never once heard from home.

Now we pass on the right the little Wesleyan cemetery where several victims of the Civil War lie buried; for this section of the town gave to the army generously of her young men, and further on we come to Riverview and Thurston's Point with their summer colonies. Harebells used to grow around a bowlder at the latter place but they are now extinct.

We are now really on the end of the "Neck of House Lots" and we wend our way along the pleasant road bordered by wild rose bushes and cherry trees. On the right lies Mill river with the village church perched upon the hill and on the left the near-by clam flats, Annisquam River, and the sand dunes of Coffin's farm. It is hardly believable but in place of these unprofitable wastes of sand was once a thickly wooded tract of land, the farm of Peter Coffin. Here surrounded by his slaves he lived the life of a gentleman, one of the principal men of the town, serving it in various capacities. His eldest son inherited the farm, but unsuccessful in business he came back here to live and contrary to the express admonitions of his father, cut down the trees, living on the sale of the timber as

long as it lasted. With the trees gone the sand swept in and no one living remembers it as being other than it is now.

Coming to the foot of the hill we miss an old house similar in architecture to the old Wheeler house. It burnt down about a dozen years ago, but the people who lived in it and who played their part in life honestly and well, are worth remembering, and so too are the old fashioned roses that grew in the yard and by the front door.

And now we see cottages sprinkled along the way with their doorstep gardens of tansy and useful herbs, and just to the right over the wall we see a planked platform and wonder what it covers. This platform covers a deep stoned up well, which with an oaken iron bound bucket from time immemorial, had served the people of the neighborhood with Nature's own refreshing drink. For some years this part of the Point was owned by two men and when the last lot of land was sold, the owner of this particular tract, unwilling to deprive anyone of the privilege so long enjoyed, reserved this well with a few feet of land around it, so that whosoever would, could drink of its waters as freely as in the past. It held its own for several years, buckets and ropes being supplied as needed; then a modern pump was put down and finally with the introduction of city water the well fell into disuse; but perhaps at some future time in the interest of the



picturesque, it may be restored to its former dignity.

Just beyond this the Wheeler property began and was separated from it by a stone wall with a pair of bars. In the old house still standing was reared a large family of sons and daughters, most of whom married and settled in cottage houses near by.

The writer remembers Mrs. Wheeler very distinctly; in memory she is always pictured as standing in the doorway with the lines of humor and kindness playing around her mouth, and a far off look in her eyes. She was a woman with a good sense of humor, and of keen wit.

I fear I am picturing Wheeler's Point as it used to be more than as it is today. The Summer resident has come with ephemeral looking cottages, and the automobile has worn off the grass from the country road, but I hope the originality, honesty and industry which characterized the native population still remains. They had opinions of their own and expressed them. Some were Methodists and took a long walk up hill and down dale, and then again up hill to the church on the opposite side where their voices were heard. Others were Universalists and walked either to the harbor church or got "set across" to the church at Annisquam. The writer remembers one dainty little lady who in black taffeta and Paisley shawl, used to pass by on pleasant Sunday mornings.

But here we are at the very top of the point looking off toward Squam Bar with the waves glistening in the sun, and breaking over the bar. Associated with Squam Bar is a story that was told me when I was many years younger than I am now, so many that I think it may be unknown to the present generation, and may be told again as an example of homely wit and quiet humor. It was of an old man who used to attend the meeting of the early Methodists and who sometimes got impatient at the frequent rhapsodies of the brethren over the life beyond. At such times when he felt that the soarers were soaring too high and needed to be called down to earth, he raised his quavering voice and sang the following verse:—not being able to sound his v's they became w's and this is as he sang it:

Some people they call Christians how many things they tell  
About the land of Canaan where saints and angels dwell,  
But wessels built by human skill have never got so far  
But what they've got aground on Squam River Sandy Bar.

Whether he lived on this or the other side of Mill River I do not know, but he must have been of a contemplative turn of mind who saw an analogy between a vessel getting aground on Squam Bar and the spiritual obstruction one would encounter in prying too particularly into the land beyond. In imagination I can hear him singing the last line with ill concealed triumph, and the pause that followed must have been impressive.

In point of actual walking we have covered but little time, but in point of history and reminiscence we have covered two centuries or more. We hold in our hands the wild flowers that we have found growing along our pathway, and in our memories the annals of types of people either wholly disappeared or fast disappearing.

It is time to retrace our footsteps unless some boatman appears who will "set us across" to Annisquam where we will make our way by the pretty curving streets and across the bridge to the main road; but if we go back the same way we came, we may if we wish vary the walk by going down the road on the right of the cemetery which brings us out on Hodgkins Street in sight of the old mill and thence to Washington Street.



## X

### TO RAVENSWOOD PARK TO VIEW THE MAGNOLIA IN FLOWER

"Long they sat and talked together  
Of the marvellous valley hidden in the depths of Gloucester woods,  
Full of plants that love the summer, blooms of warmer latitudes,  
Where the Arctic birch is braided by the tropics flowery vines,  
And the white magnolia blossoms star the twilight of the pines."



N the great abundance of her treasures, Nature has nothing more beautiful than the *Magnolia Glauca*, and perhaps that is why she has secreted it in swamps far removed from the hand of the ruthless. The ivory white flower hidden in a cluster of leaves, wonderful for shape and color, emitting a most delicate perfume, makes a single blossom a prized possession; but these flowers glorious in their isolation, are accessible only to him who knows the ways of the swamp.

They may be seen however, from the corduroy road in Ravenswood Park, and while there are three entrances to the park, the most direct approach to the swamp is by the old Salem Road. We take the Manchester bus and get off at Beachmont Avenue; and almost directly opposite on the right we see a road leading over the hill, which was the old stage coach road. We take this road following it past the Hermit's log house and a newly made road that joins

it on the left, and look for a path leading down the slope. This path will bring us out on the corduroy road, from which we can see "the blossoms that star the twilight of the pines".

Single magnolia trees are also seen in gardens round about our city and strange to say while a habitat of the swamp, it seems to thrive in soil not especially wet. The writer knows of one instance at least, where two or three survived a conflagration, coming up again from the roots after having been burnt to the ground.

It is interesting to know that on Cape Ann it reaches its most northern limit of growth, and was discovered by the Rev. Manassah Cutler, a minister of Ipswich Hamlet, now Hamilton, some time in the last part of the eighteenth century. The story goes that having become acquainted with its fragrance while living in the South, he recognized it one day in passing our swamp on horseback. Alighting from his horse he traced the fragrance to its source, and acquainted the townspeople with his discovery.

Undoubtedly the story is true, for judging from his diary, he was interested in many things outside of his profession. He appears to have been frequently in the saddle, going from place to place. Now coming to Gloucester to assist Parson Jones in making astronomical observations, now going to Annisquam with

this same Reverend gentleman to collect fossils. He also records that he "studied Physic", and at one time had twenty-four smallpox patients under his care, so what is more natural than to think that this versatile person was interested in our beautiful flora.

And here perhaps the writer may be pardoned a digression; for the old time minister of whom Parson Cutler was a type, whose counterpart does not exist today, deserves a passing notice. Settled for life, and never dismissed from his chosen field of labor, except by the recommendation of a council from the neighboring churches, which was an occasion of fasting and prayer, he was by common consent, treated with a respect equalled but by few secular officials. The boys took off their hats, and the girls dropped curtsies to him on the street, and in the homes his counsels were received with humility. In the pulpit his expositions were unquestioned till well along in the eighteenth century; and when a newer light broke upon some, and there was a radical change in their theology, not infrequently did whole congregations follow their beloved teacher and guide into "fresh woods and pastures green".

Think not however, that these old soldiers of the cross were "wafted to the skies on flowery beds of ease". Far from it, for their avocations were many. The old time minister was almost always expected to be schoolmaster, physician, and mechanic even, in



addition to his pastoral duties which at times were most exacting.

In separating from the mother church, the office of marriage was changed from a sacrament to a civil act. Prayers were not required or customary at funerals, but the presence of a minister was claimed at every death-bed, even of a child. He was likely to be summoned at any hour of the night, and in times of great mortality the strain on his vitality was terrific. Parson Chandler records in his diary of fainting from sheer exhaustion while in attendance on a departing spirit.

Following them through the woods on their lonely midnight journeys when every sense was on the alert, we do not marvel that they developed a keenness of vision and a sensitiveness of scent unknown to the ordinary traveller.

This exquisite flower owes its name to Magnol, a French botanist, *glauca* referring to the gray green underside of its leaves. Its fruit is small, green and conical. When ripe the seeds which are of a scarlet color burst their cells and remain some days suspended without, by their slender filaments. To preserve for any length of time their faculty for germinating, they must be placed as soon as gathered, before the pulp becomes withered, in rotten wood or sand, slightly moistened and kept in a cool place till planted in the ground.

From the corduroy road, we may take a gravel road that will take us out to Western Avenue.



## XI

### ALONG THE SHORE AND ACROSS THE MARSH FOR CARDINAL FLOWER

"The sunlit moon,  
The sweet warm light of afternoon,  
The spurting torch of the Cardinal flower,  
The wan white rose,  
The Winter gale and April shower,  
O, that I had the power  
To fashion these with joyous hand  
In music worlds might understand."



THIS very beautiful flower is found in many localities on our Cape. A habitat of wet places, it grows on swampy land, along creeks, but oftenest, perhaps, beside brooks. Mr. Parsons in his anniversary poem, speaks of it as "flanking the little brook beside the Mill", and he had undoubtedly in mind the Alewife brook where the first mill of the town stood; for in the writer's remembrance, it grew plentifully there.

It is a native of North America, belongs to the *Lobelia* family, and unquestionably derives its name from the likeness it bears to the gorgeous official dress of the cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church. We may not be able to find it this afternoon, as by careless picking, it is fast becoming extinct in places where it once flourished, but our walk along the shore will have

a varied interest for us, recalling here and there an historic incident.

As the Cardinal is in flower early in August we will plan to take our walk then, and on a clear day when all the objects of interest may be seen. We take the Rockport or Long Beach bus and get off at Witham Street, or as we like to call it, the Joppa Road. After walking a very short distance on this road, by looking directly across on our right, we may see the spot where once stood a comfortably sized cottage house, the home of our historian, the Honorable John J. Babson, to whom our city owes an everlasting debt of gratitude; not only for the time he gave to painstaking historical research, but also for his unselfish labor in our public schools.

Actively engaged in business affairs for the greater part of his life, his leisure was entirely devoted to enriching his own mind and using his acquirements for the benefit of his townsmen. A few of us remember seeing his erect figure as he walked into town with an alert step; fewer still perhaps remember the glance of those kindly eyes as he entered a school-room, giving confidence and encouragement to both teacher and scholar. His History of Gloucester is justly rated as among the first of local histories, not only for its historical merit, but for its beauty of diction.

We walk the whole length of this charming old road till we come to the beach, and then take the

shore road leaving Salt Island and Little Good Harbor Beach behind, with Milk Island and Thacher's in the distance beyond. As there has been some question raised as to the correct name of this beach I will say that it has always been named as above: Little, being corrupt English used by the Indians to signify "not very good", and should never be omitted, as it has acquired permanence from long usage.

Looking out upon the water we see our two islands very plainly. Milk Island has no historical interest that I know of; its ownership has always been in private hands and has never been utilized for anything but grazing purposes; sheep having been kept there years ago — possibly other cattle. Thacher's however, with its twin lights sometimes called Ann's eyes, lighted in 1771 and kept in operation continuously since, except during the period of the Revolutionary War, is full of historical interest and deserves more than a passing notice. The origin of its name is familiar to us all, but to those who have read the details of the tragedy as given by the old annalists in their quaint and unstudied language, the island takes on a pathos which is accentuated by every wave that beats upon its shore. Here is the story:—

John Avery and Anthony Thacher were cousins and both English Non-Conformists. Avery was a minister and Thacher had acted as curate in his

brother's parish, but in coming to this country he was listed a "tayler" in the ship's passengers.

Before leaving England they seem to have made a solemn compact, or as Thacher himself expresses it, "a perpetual league of friendship, never to forsake each other to the death, but to be partakers of each others' misery or welfare, as also of habitation in the same place".

They arrived in New England June 4th 1635 and Mr. Avery was invited to go to Marblehead, where there was yet no church but a settlement. "Many there" however were "something loose and remiss in their behaviour" and Mr. Avery who was called by Mather "a precious holy man" could not bring himself to go there, but went to Newbury; and the faithful Thacher according to the "league" he had made accompanied him. After a short stay there—we do not know,—perhaps his conscience troubled him; at all events he decided to go to Marblehead and his friend proves his constancy by breaking up such arrangements as he had been able to make for a home and follows him.

We can see the little company in imagination as they set out, going on the little pinnacle at nightfall in order to catch the first favorable morning breeze. Avery with his wife, six children and servants—they cost practically nothing but their keep in those days;—Thacher with his four children, servants and

second wife, whom he had married six weeks before leaving England. They wait for one more, Thomas Thacher, a nephew of Anthony; but an unconquerable depression and presentiment as to the unfavorable outcome of the voyage has taken possession of him and at the last moment he falters and decides to make the journey by land. A stranger takes his place, which with the four seamen make a company of twenty-three souls. We can see them disposing of their meagre possessions and settling down for the night, not without commending themselves to the God in whom they trust. In the morning a breeze takes them out of the harbor. They are expecting to reach their new home by nightfall of another day, or sooner; but they encounter contrary winds, their little pinnacle is ill supplied with sails and the second night finds them off Cape Ann. And here we quote from the quaint letter of Mr. Thacher to his brother Peter, "the Mariners" he says, "would not put to sails, but to cast anchor till morning, but before daylight it pleased the Lord to send so mighty a storm as the like was never known in New England; it was so furious that our anchor came home whereupon the mariners let out more cable which at last slipped away. Then our sailors knew not what to do, but were driven before the wind." Here follows a most pathetic picture of the little group as they sat "comforting and cheering each other in the Lord against

ghastly death which stared them in the face and sat triumphing upon each one's forehead." There was "no screech" he says, but suddenly they were driven by the violence of the waves upon "a rock between two high rocks and yet all one rock". Four of them, Mr. Avery and his daughter, Mr. Thacher and his oldest son, succeeded in getting into a hole on the top of one of the high rocks and thought that not only they were safe but that the others in the pinnacle might come to them.

Another merciless wave however, swept them into the water and at the same time struck the boat with such force it went to pieces. It was then while these distressed servants of God were hanging on to the rock and Mr. Thacher held Mr. Avery by the hand, both resolving to die together, that Mr. Avery lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said "we know not what the pleasure of God is, I fear we have been too unmindful of his former deliverances, Lord I cannot challenge a promise of my life, but thou hast promised to deliver us from condemnation and to bring us safe to heaven through the all sufficient satisfaction of Jesus Christ, this therefore I challenge Thee". No sooner had he finished speaking than a wave swept him off and indeed wafted him to heaven, but his last words form the basis of Whittier's poem "Parson Avery's Swan Song" with which we are all familiar.

Thacher got a foothold and reached the shore;



in a few moments his wife extricated herself from the breaking timbers and joined him, the only two souls that were saved out of the twenty-three that had embarked. Most pitiful are the father's feelings described in the letter before referred to, as "he looked for his children and saw them not". The remembrance of their faces "poor silent lambs" seemed to have bored into his soul, and we cannot but wonder if they ever ceased to haunt him.

But these were heroic days; some clothing including a scarlet cloak which if not now in existence, was for a long time — and tradition says was wrapped around every baby of Thacher descent at christening — provisions, and best of all a snapsack containing materials for striking a fire were washed ashore. The Thachers made themselves comfortable till they were taken off two days later, and on leaving the island which was afterward granted him, he gave it the name of Thacher's Woe. Public and private generosity relieved their destitute condition and they proceeded to Marblehead where he preached a few years, but subsequently removed to Yarmouth where he remained the rest of his life, filling many important offices and dying at the age of eighty.

Three more children were born to him from whom sprang a long line of descendants eminent in various walks of life; but we have finished our story and have come to the creek where we must turn up

and cross the marsh. There is but one house on the marsh which we pass and take a path into the woods; and as we walk along we will inquire into the future of Thomas whose forebodings led him to take the journey by land, instead of casting his lot with the others. The speculative are sure to ask "why was he so depressed, why had he such forebodings"?

Like many other questions these must lie unanswered till we know more about these things than we do now. Of one thing we are sure; he made a great deal of his life, for he was a most brilliant scholar, being proficient in Arabic and Syrian, and so well versed in Hebrew as to make a lexicon of the language. To his linguistic acquirements he added a knowledge of Mechanics and Physics, the last year of his life publishing the first medical treatise that appeared in America.

Much more that is interesting might be added regarding the descendants of this man, but this would not be local history, and we must not forget, that we came out in search of the Cardinal flower. We should now be not far from a not very well defined path leading to the left, and taking this path, we walk on till we come to a ditch. Here perhaps we may discover "the Cardinals fiery plume"; and if we are so fortunate, I am sure as lovers of our native wild flowers we will take more satisfaction in seeing it growing, than taking it away with us.



Turtle-head also grows here which is a flower interesting more for its curious formation, than for its beauty.

Turning back to the farm road again, we follow it till we come to Pleasant Street, Rockport, which is not far from the highway where we take the bus for home.

Our walk this afternoon has not taken us far afield or consumed more than a few hours time, but we have gone for our history nearly three centuries into the past. Truly,

"The great eventful Present hides the Past, but through the din  
Of its loud life hints and echoes from the life behind steal in ;  
And the lore of home and fireside, and the legendary rhyme,  
Make the task of duty lighter which the  
True man owes his time."



## XII

### DOWN THE OLD WEST GLOUCESTER CAUSEWAY FOR FALSE FOXGLOVE

"The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:  
Little we see in Nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away a sordid boon."



T is late summer; the flowers in our woods will soon be gone—few now are left, but the composites: the *Geradias* however are not yet out of flower, so let us go in search of the False Foxglove, a very lovely member of that family. There are two kinds—the downy, which is a low shrub, with an entire leaf; and the fern-leaved, which has a much higher stalk, with a more indented leaf. Both have a pale yellow bell-shaped flower, of a sweet elusive fragrance—the latter being a little larger.

It is found in several places on the Cape, but for a pleasant walk, we will take the West Gloucester bus to Concord Street. Leaving the bus here, we walk down Concord to Causeway Street, which we see on the right, a large yellow house, on a slight elevation at our left, serving as a landmark.

We follow this road till within a very short distance of the Causeway leading to Russ' Island, when

by looking carefully on the right, we shall see a path leading through the tall reed-like grass to the upland. We follow this path, and under the oak trees, we shall soon see the delicate, fern-like foliage, and the yellow flowers of the False Foxglove, for which we are looking.

This is a parasitic plant, which feeds on the roots of the oak tree, so we must resist any temptation we might have of taking away a root for transplanting, and content ourselves with the blossoms.

Coming back, we retrace our steps to Concord Street, pondering as we go, on the hardship the early settlers of this section must have experienced for many years, in attending church on the Green; for they had to come over this road, cross Russ' Island, and then take the ferry from Biskie Head to Trynal's Cove on the opposite shore.

As in those days attendance at church worship was compulsory, this road must have felt the imprint of many an unwilling foot, but we cannot believe that the recording Angel thought this sin worthy of record.

If we wish to find the downy species of this family, on regaining Concord Street we walk on to Atlantic Avenue, and turn down here, walking till we come to a ledge on our left. Opposite this ledge is a grassy lane, turning down at right, which we follow and soon see a causeway of broken granite. We cross this and also a similar one farther on, which

brings us out to a little wooded island. Here we shall find both varieties, but not in great abundance. If not too late in the season, another species of the same family, the low, purple *Gerardia*, will also be in flower, and along the water's edge on the marsh, we may find Sea Lavender, or Rosemary.

"O gracious mother whose benignant breast  
Wakes us to life and lulls us all to rest  
How thy sweet features, kind to every clime  
Mock with their smile the wrinkled front of time."





## XIII

### ON THE OLD WEST PARISH ROAD PAST THE SITE OF THE 2D PARISH CHURCH AND THE OLD BURYING GROUND

"Along this old West Parish way  
The summer grasses grow;  
Beside it, gleaming bright today  
The wild pink roses blow;  
By brambled thicket, brake, and fen,  
On level green, or hill,  
It turns and winds, and turns again,  
As country roadways will.

Here some old garden bush o'ergrown  
Among the green, shows grey;  
Some mossy old foundation-stone  
Where, in the Province day,  
Some settler made his home, and yet  
With crimson flush aglow,  
The garden rose-bush that he set  
Its old-time bloom will show.

Here years, their temple held its pace,  
Now bush and tree o'ergrown,  
You scarce with labored search can trace  
Each old foundation-stone.  
I walk with loitering feet today  
Across the verdant sod,  
And tread the blossom-bordered way  
Those old-time worthies trod."



PERHAPS there is nothing that furnishes a more sympathetic theme to a poet than an old road. It was doubtless a Summer's walk that our West Parish poet took over the old meeting-house road, and in our imagination we can see him, rich in the historic lore of the locality, that had been familiar to him from boyhood, wandering over this fast disappearing roadway. Now, he loiters by a wild-rose, that beckons to him from a brambled thicket; now, he pauses before the vestiges of an old orchard, beside the foundation-stones of what was once an old settler's home; and now he drops a

sigh, perhaps, beside an old garden rose bush, bravely blooming on, long after the hands that set it there have been crossed in the everlasting peace.

Finally, he comes to the foundation-stones of the old church, even in that day scarcely traceable; and as he stands there, he feels the presence of those old worthies, treading "the blossom bordered way".

We will take this walk in mid or late September, for the path is not an easy one, and we need the bracing air of early Fall to encourage our footsteps. We may not even be successful in tracing the old foundation-stones, but we may at least familiarize ourselves with the history of the old church.

As in our previous walks, we have recourse to the friendly bus, and having taken the one bound for West Gloucester, we get off at Concord Street. We follow Concord Street, which used to be called the Lower Parish Road, till we come to Thompson Street on our left. We turn in Thompson Street, which is a fairly well-defined road at first, but soon becomes only a path, very much beset with briars and brambles, which often impede our progress. It is, however, an unmistakable path, and there is no uncertainty of direction, for a good stone wall on either side separates the original road from the adjoining pastures.

The trodden way lies quite closely to the wall on our left; and while we are somewhat inconvenienced by obstructions, our walk is not without beauty. The



hills on our right are radiant with a wonderful variety of Golden-Rod; the graceful Sweet Fern is seen in abundance, and we may even refresh ourselves with Fox Berries, which in places along our path are quite plentiful.

If we take our walk in mid-September, we shall also find Ladies' Tresses, Polygala, and the low purple Geradia. Emerging from the thicket, we come out on an open place, and a low spreading rock invites a rest after our strenuous walk. Looking around us, we see the Bearberry growing nearby, the dark red berry peeping out from under the brownish-green vine, reminding one a little of the wild Cranberry. The blossom of the Bearberry is of a delicate pink, not unlike the Arbutus, and the plant receives its rather unpleasant name from the relish with which bears are supposed to devour its fruit. Standing on this rock, we see where the path leads away to the right, and we soon come to a ledge and a large boulder.

Here we find a pathway leading up to a hill or plateau and just to the southeast stood the old church. But few of the "old foundation-stones" are left now—most of them have been gradually carried away by impious hands to serve anew in structures far less congenial to them. Why not have left them in their repose fit companions to the remnants of a few old poplars, that still stand to attest the love of beauty that somehow crept into the souls of these old pioneers. Looking

down from the plateau, the scene is one of incomparable beauty and one cannot but feel that the site was chosen with intention. May we not, go even farther, and imagine these old keepers of the faith, chanting in their hearts, as they made the ascent.

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?  
And who shall stand in his holy place?  
He that hath clean hands and a pure heart  
Who hath not lifted up his soul to Vanity,  
Nor sworn deceitfully.”

At best, perhaps, we have only approximately fixed the boundaries of the old church, but we may refresh our minds with a bit of history. In 1688, one fourth of the population of the town were living in this section, and as the roads were poor, and the distance around the head of Annisquam River was quite considerable, a ferry was established in 1694 from Biskie Head to Trynall Cove, where the fare was one penny for a person, and two for a horse.

But even this mode of travel was very inconvenient in Winter weather, and in 1712 the town was petitioned to set off this locality as a separate precinct. The request was not granted, but the petitioners were allowed to hire a teacher for the three Winter months, who should also preach to them, thus combining the offices of teacher and preacher. This arrangement continued till 1716, when they were granted leave to become a separate precinct, and maintain a Parish church.

This was the second religious organization of the town, and Mr. Thompson, who had served them acceptably the preceding four years, was chosen their settled pastor. He had a house near the church, was married, and had five children, but being of frail constitution, died in 1724, and was buried in the old cemetery. We shall visit his grave later on in our walk.

The pastorate of the next minister was an unhappy one, but his successor, Parson Fuller, the last settled minister of the church, was a benediction to the Parish. He came there, a young man, in 1769, just preceding the trying years of the Revolution; but the struggle ended, he entered upon a serene and untroubled ministry. For something more than fifty years, he ministered to this people, only closing his labors when he felt the infirmities of age approaching. After his removal from town, he often returned to the scene of his life-long ministry, visiting among his former parishioners, and Mr. Babson quaintly remarks in his history: "The longer his stay was extended, the more his departure was regretted."

After the closing of this pastorate, the pulpit was filled by ministers of other denominations, largely Universalists. We read in the church records of members being disciplined for holding views incompatible with those of the church, and it is easy to see that they were growing into a more liberal faith. Finally, those of the Universalist faith went off and

organized a society of their own; the original church ceased to exist, and the ancient edifice was left to the vandalism of boys, and the decaying elements of time. No response was given to an appeal to repair it, and although the oaken timbers were still stalwart, it was torn down in 1846.

We now take up our walk again, strolling along to Bray Street, which we cross, and come again into Thompson Street, which is now a grassy road, quite different from the section we have just left. Following this road, we soon come to the old cemetery, now overgrown with briar and bush. This was the second cemetery, set apart by the town about the beginning of the 18th century. Few of the stones are now standing; that, however, of the Rev. Samuel Thompson is in a fair state of preservation. We shall find it in the south-west corner, and the inscription can be easily deciphered.

Here lies buried  
Ye body of ye Revd.  
Mr. Samuel Thompson  
Pastour of ye 2nd.  
Church of Christ in  
Glosester aged 33  
Years    decd. December  
Ye       8       1724.

1724—1824—1923—Nearly two hundred years have passed since this young life went out, and it possesses a pathetic interest for us, since nothing is known of his descendants, though as before mentioned he left a wife and five children, the little Samuel being

a posthumous child. A contemporary speaks of him as having been "of pleasant aspect and mein; of a sweet temper; inoffensive in his whole behavior; pious and peaceable in his conversation". The writer then adds that "his ministerial gifts were superior, his success answerable, and as he preached, so he lived and died in the faith".

What a tribute! Can anyone doubt that his life, even though short, left an impress on his fellow-beings, which, broadening through the years, may be felt even at this present day. "For the things seen are temporal, but the things unseen are eternal."

It is getting late, and the shadows are lengthening. We may keep on this road and come out on Concord Street again, which brings us to Essex Avenue; but for the sake of the beautiful view we will retrace our steps to Bray Street, walk to Turtle Pond Hill, and take a cross path by the side of the pond to Sumner Street. Going along this path, we gaze with rapture at the beautiful stretch of country that Nature has spread out for us on our left; and turning from the scenes of desolation of the early afternoon, to this beautiful living picture, the lines of Mathew Arnold come to our mind;

"Still do thy quiet ministers move on,  
Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting;  
Still working, blaming our vain turmoil;  
Laborers that shall not fail when Man is gone."

From Sumner Street to Essex Avenue is a short walk, and we wait again for our friend, the bus.



## XIV

### TO THE WHALE'S JAW OVER LAMB LEDGE

"I like the Fall, I like the way it smells of smoke,  
and dry leaves burning."



HERE is a haze in the air, the October sun shimmers drowsily in the heavens, and the spell of Dogtown is upon us. We must take another walk to the Whale's Jaw, but not wholly over the same roads. Today we will go up over Lamb Ledge (as in the walk for Skunk Cabbage) and come out as before on the old Rockport road.

We walk then toward the east till we come to a stile, and going in by this stile, cross Split Rock pasture by a good path. We follow the path around the hill, get over some bars, and walk up the railroad track a short distance till we come to a second pair of bars. We now follow a path over a gravel bank, get over two walls, cross a brook, and take a path across pasture to Vivian's Road. We cross this road, and come to a swamp on our left; but there is a good path around it, which we take, and soon we come out on Gee Avenue near Peter's Pulpit. From this point we can see the Whale's Jaw, and we now proceed as in our previous walk.



Arrived at our objective point, we sit down under the shadow of this huge cleft rock to rest. How changed is the aspect of nature from what greeted us on our previous walk; but where is there a soul so insensible to its charms, as to be unmoved at the spectacle set out before us. There is no sense of beginningness it is true as there was in the Spring, the delicate and tender foliage has gradually become hardened and colored by the scorching suns of summer and the later cold of Autumn, but what repose! The season's work is done and a restful sense of accomplishment fills the air. How like the life of a plant is the life of an individual when lived at its best.

"One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee;  
 One lesson, which in every wind is blown;  
 One lesson of two duties kept at one  
 Though the loud world proclaim their enmity.  
 Of toil, unsevered from tranquility —  
 Of labor that in lasting fruit outgrows  
 Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose;  
 Too great for haste, too high for rivalry."

Returning, we go back to Peter's Pulpit, walk down Gee Avenue a short distance, and then take a path to the left that brings us to the Vivian Road. We then follow this road to Cherry Street, which we take, going over Fox Hill, and coming out on Poplar Street. Here we may go to the right to Washington Street, or to the left to Maplewood Avenue.

It is late afternoon when we reach our own door. The lengthening shadows soon give place to darkness,



and as the night closes in upon us, and we light the lamp, our mind reverts to the scene left behind only a few hours before. We have gathered no flowers, but each of us has culled a bunch of the fragrant Bayberry; and, as we hold it in our hand, we wonder if the bushes left behind hug the rocks more closely in the darkness, and if they miss the touch of the hands that once gathered their grey-green berries for candles.

The picture, too, of the great cleft rock, silhouetted against the sky, looms up before us, and again we wonder if it ever gets tired of standing there, forever a silent witness of Nature's powerful forces.





## XV

### TO WOLF HILL IN NOVEMBER

"I want to stride the hills; my feet cry out  
For hills! Oh, I am sick to death of streets;  
The nausea of pavements, and people always about;  
The savagery of mortar and steel, that beats  
Me under, hedges me in."



LET us go to the hills—the beautiful low hills – that look down upon the Annisquam River; and let us go if we can on a day in November, such as Whittier describes in his "St. Martin's Summer," when

"The Summer and the Winter here  
Midway a truce are holding;  
A soft, consenting atmosphere  
Their tents of peace unfolding.  
  
The silent woods, the lonely hills,  
Rise solemn in their gladness;  
The quiet, that the valley fills  
Is scarcely joy or sadness."

This walk may be taken from town entirely on foot, starting from any point on Washington Street, and walking directly to Marsh Street, which is about a mile distant from the Community House. This street was, in the writer's remembrance, only a lane that terminated with a pair of bars directly across from the cemetery entrance—all beyond was a large cow-pasture.

There were then three old houses on it, one of which is still standing, in its original shape, another is standing, but so altered and enlarged as to be unrecognizable, and the other has been torn down. Without doubt, this was one of the first inhabited localities in town, for on a map of 1740, the dwelling houses of three of our earliest settlers are indicated, perhaps the three just spoken of.

Sometime in the sixties a quarry was opened just beyond the bars, and the road was extended for the purpose of working it; but the granite, which was of a beautiful pink color, was found to be impracticable for building purposes, and it was abandoned. The opening, however, then made, seemed to suggest possibilities for building, and houses began to be built there. These houses gave such satisfaction, that, from that time on, lot after lot has been taken, till now the entire hill is dotted over with summer homes.

As to the granite quarry, stone was cut from it for our first City Hall that was destroyed by fire, and some may have been sent out of town—I think some was; but the only specimens that I know of in Gloucester are two monuments in Oak Grove Cemetery, one bearing the name of Nathaniel Babson and the other David Allen.

Well, we walk down the road, and as we cannot expect to see flowers at this time of year, we will stop

and look at some Barberry bushes on the left, that are much more beautiful in fruit than in flower. They will doubtless be glad to have us pick a few sprays for our table decoration, for they must miss the eager hands that used to strip their branches for a sauce, that invariably was served at dinner. Many of us remember when our mothers used to lay in their bushel or two of barberries, and put them up in molasses-sugar.

As this was before the days of glass jars, the sauce was turned into large stone crocks, which stood in a row on the closet floor. Beside being used on the table, diluted with water, it was considered a safe and refreshing drink for the sick possessed of some medicinal qualities. All this, however, is now changed; we no longer go for barberries, or stem them of a November evening. It may be only a fancy, but somehow the bushes do not look so thrifty and enterprising as they used to, nor do the berries present such a fat and opulent an appearance as in former days. I suppose the picking was good for them.

Having picked our little bouquet, we proceed past the sumacs and blue bramble-berries, till we come to two roads, one branching off to the left by the shore, the other going over the hill; we must eventually take the latter road, but, if the tide is in, it will repay us to walk along the shore road, till we see prohibitory signs, for besides having a pretty view of the river, much was done to beautify this road by a lover

of Nature, not now living. We can then come back, and take the hill road.

Before going over the hill, we must not fail to see at its base, on the extreme right, a clump of black Alder bushes, scarlet with berries; and as this is a berry, rather than a flower walk, we stop here and gather enough for the decoration of our Thanksgiving table. The bushes are tall and not too accessible; but those of us who are long of limb must be generous to those who are not so fortunate.

And now we come again to two roads, going in opposite directions, neither of which we take, but proceed to the next turn to the right. This is a stony, unattractive road, but we have to take it, for it is the road that leads around the base of the hill. Following this road, we come again to the beautiful shore of the Annisquam River, with the island over across, and soon reach Trynall's Cove, which was the mainland end of the ferry. For about a hundred years this ferry plied between Biskie Head and the little cove; and during all that time the right of running it was held by successive members of the Hodgkins family.

As this was the connecting line between the First and Second Parishes, the road from it—the one we are about to take—must have been a much-travelled one; but with the passing of the ferry, occasioned probably by the lessened importance of this part of the town, it gradually fell into disuse, until

finally it was seldom frequented, except by people who pastured cattle in the adjacent pastures.

Partly, perhaps, from the recital of a ghastly murder, that was committed in the vicinity, partly from its inherent loneliness, it came to be an avoided road, and the writer remembers as a child, how the steps were quickened in passing it, especially if caught there at nightfall. An air of mystery seemed to hang over it, and it always seemed a possible hiding-place for evil-doers. The story too, of the old man Hewet who lived on the corner, was always told. He lived to the age of 108 years and said that God had forgotten him, so finally he starved himself to death.

But none of these stories depress us today; houses in proximity, even though now closed, speak of life and its wholesome activities, to be renewed with the returning Spring. We take a parting look at the wonderful reflections in the calm and peaceful water, and then turn up the road, drinking in the beauty of the gorgeous coloring. Soon the hills loom up on either side, taking on, in the light of the setting sun, a look of dignity, if not of majesty; the approaching twilight sharpens their outlines against the sky, till, finally, all details are lost, and only impressive masses of earth and rock, looking forward to the birth of another morn, stand out in the slowly dissolving landscape.



Good old Dr. Watts has said it for us better  
than we can say it ourselves.

“Before the hills in order stood,  
Or Earth received its name,  
From everlasting Thou art God  
To endless years the same.”

We have come out by the hospital with its  
twinkling lights, to Washington Street. We can take  
the bus here, or walk, as we please.



## XVI

### TO THE WOODS FOR CHRISTMAS GREENS

"O gracious beauty, ever new and old!  
O sights and sounds of Nature, doubly dear  
When the low sunshine warns the closing year  
Of snow-blown fields and waves of Arctic cold!"



THE sun hangs low in the heavens and warns us of the approach of the great Feast of the Christian year. We must go to the woods for our Christmas greens; for while we may buy our wreaths in the market, they are only half our own—to have them a part of ourselves, we must go for them, and bring home with each green branch and creeping fern the fragrance and atmosphere of the woods.

The early Christians did not celebrate the feast of Christ's birth till well along into the 2nd century, and possibly not until many years after; for the first historic evidence we have of it, was in the reign of Domitian. Even then there was no particular month set for it, but sometime in the 5th century, the western church ordered that then and forever after, it should be celebrated on the 25th of December. This day was not selected by chance, but with intention; for it being the date of the Winter solstice, it had long been celebrated by the Romans.

Indeed, the entire heathen world, especially the more northern nations, held this day in great veneration, viewing in the return of Sol, the beginning of renewed life and activities of the powers of Nature, and of the Gods. Many of these old usages and beliefs of heathen Rome and Germany had passed over into Christianity, and in order to combat them, the church instituted rituals, which, while keeping the date, engrafted a Christian festival upon that they were used to celebrating.

Washington Irving, in his *Christmas at Bracebridge Hall*, shows how many of these customs had persisted—the yule-log, the wassail bowl, and the waits; but beginning at an early date, the church displaced them by dramatic representations of events in the life of Christ, manger-songs and carols, till finally a universal religious festival was established. Thus we see, that while we do not celebrate the day of the natural birth of Christ, we do much more, we celebrate the birth of the spiritual transformation, that came to the heathen world; what He came to bring, and what His life stood for.

Now, with this background, we will go for our Christmas greens; and it will depend very much upon our resources—physical and accessory—where we go. For those of us who have automobiles (the bus does not well serve us) it would be fine to go to the Essex woods, where we find all those graceful creeping things—half fern, half moss—that are called

in the Botany, Lycopodiums. We know them, though incorrectly, by the general name of ground-pine; but really, only one variety is rightly so called.

We motor on the Essex Road as far as Pond Street, turn in here, and go directly into the woods, keeping to the right for perhaps a mile. Here we are surrounded by the beauty of the woods in winter and we eagerly push aside the dry leaves in search of the fragrant trailing greens. The winter air has invigorated us, our contact with Nature has cheered us, and, with our arms filled with our treasures, we regain our car. "O, the poetry of Earth is never dead."

And just here the writer cannot refrain from recalling the days when the fine old New England farmer, bright of eye and ruddy of countenance, owned his own wood lot and cut from it his winter's supply of wood. The trees had usually been felled beforehand and sawed into eight foot lengths by the wood choppers, but it had yet to be hauled home; and this part of the Winter's work must be done when the snow lay crisp upon the ground.

The old wooden shod sled that had been "doctored up" in the leisure of early Winter and fitted with rough hewn posts at each of the four corners was brought out; and to it was hitched the old farm horse, fiery perhaps in his youth, but now in the soberness of old age committed to the daily routine of farm work. With the shining axe twisted into the doubled

rope that passed between the two hind posts, the hired man in front ready to drive, and the farmer standing up behind steadying himself by the two posts—this formed a picture that lingers still in the memory. When everything was in readiness, the reins were taken up, the bells jingled, and all started off with a zest that even stirred once more the Morgan blood of old Ned.

And the home coming! Was anything ever more triumphal in the return of a victorious warrior than the taking of the last hill and the landing of the fragrant pine and hemlock at the door! The old horse is soon unhitched and given his evening feed. Later by the cheerful light of the sitting-room fire the adventures of the day are recounted to the expectant family; the balkings and jumpings being received with becoming attention. The emanations from the pitch stained clothing fill the room with a piney fragrance never to be forgotten, the healthy drowsiness with which Nature rewards her faithful servants at last overcomes the narrator, and the scene dissolves.

Now, for us who can take a good long walk, we will go to the Southern Woods for Christmas ferns and a lot of other nice things, that we shall find there. Again we take the bus for Witham Street as we did early in the year. We walk down Witham Street, and turn off to the left just before we get to the Jeffrey Parsons house. We follow this path, cross the brook, keeping to the right till we come to a ledge on the left.

We climb up over the ledge, following a winding path, which soon leads to lower ground.

Here we find the beautiful Christmas fern, and perhaps everything we want; but as lovers of Nature, let us only so gather as not to injure a plant or tree, or make it less beautiful for another year. Returning, we follow this path, which brings us to the golf-links; and by going around the links by the wall, we come out at Pleasant Street, following which we arrive at the Rockport highway, where we again take the bus.

We have had a most delightful walk, and fortunate indeed are we who have taken it; but let us now arrange a shorter one, that nearly all of us can take. This is around Bond's Hill, and we may take the bus or not, to Bond Street. We turn in here from Essex Avenue, and walk till we get to the last house on our right. Here we find a road that leads up into the woods. It is known as the Pitman road, and the house is still standing where the old man Pitman lived. We cannot perhaps find the choice things here, but sprays of Pine and Hemlock are fragrant and woodsy; they are from the great out-of-doors, and we gather for ourselves and for the "shut-ins", who thankfully welcome the bit of green—not the commercial green, but that brought by a loving friend.

The flowers are gone, the leaves falling from the trees, have made a carpet for our feet and a covering

for the young plant-life. The evergreens only remain,  
but how beautiful they are!

“Close to my heart I fold each lovely thing  
The sweet day yields; and not disconsolate  
With calm patience of the woods, I wait  
For leaf and blossom, when God gives us Spring,”

FINIS.















